

DECEMBER 9, 1934

GUEST, DR. RAYMOND L. DITMARS

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(FINAL SCRIPT)

AMERICAN BOSCH RADIO

WJZ

EXPLORERS CLUB

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5:30 - 5:45 P.M.

DECEMBER 9, 1934

SUNDAY

(SIGNATURE "SAILOR'S HORNPIPE" ACCORDION)

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT:

Presenting - the weekly meeting of the American Bosch
Radio Explorers Club!

(SIGNATURE OUT)

ANNOUNCER: Come sail the seven seas with us!

(WIND AND SURF EFFECTS)

Explore the wild jungles of Africa!

(JUNGLE EFFECTS)

Visit the Cannibal countries!

(TOM TOM EFFECTS)

Circle the globe with the American-Bosch Round-the-World
Radio!

(GUST OF WIND)

CAPTAIN BARKER:

Ahoy there, members of the American-Bosch Radio Explorers Club. This is Captain Barker speaking...Through the American Museum of Natural History, we have with us, Dr. Raymond L. Ditmars, naturalist and famous snake man of the Bronx Zoo in New York, who is going to tell us about catching strange vampire bats and poisonous snakes in South America.

South America! What vivid memories it revives. In 1911, when I was master of the steamship Lord Curzon, I had an experience with a desperate group of criminals in the port of Buenos Aires. On the day of our arrival the pilot said to me -- "Captain Barker, you'd better keep a sharp lookout while you're in this port. The Black Hand gang have been pretty active lately. Only last night they stole all the stores out of the stamer Clan MacTavish."

When we had tied up alongside the dock I called the mate into my cabin. "Mister, I said to him, "I want you to keep an eye on our deck stores. Last night a gang of ruffians cleaned out the Clan MacTavish lying astern of us!"

Don't you worry about this ship, Captain" he boasted. "The blighters won't steal anything while I'm here!"

I went ashore that same night. At seven o'clock the next morning I was returning along the docks to the ship, when, suddenly, a mounted policeman appeared from behind a warehouse. As he galloped over the railroad tracks in the freight yard, I saw that he was dragging the body of a man on the end of a lasso. The sight was not a pleasant one, I may tell you.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN BARKER:--(CONTINUED)

When I got back aboard the Lord Curzon the mate, who had been so cocky the day before, met me at the gangway. His face was the color of Cape Horn pea soup, and he trembled like a leaf. "It was horrible," he blurted. "The police found him hiding in the store- room aft -- dragged him off on the end of a rope."

"Dragged who off? -- What are you talking about?" I demanded.

"That Black Hand fellow," he stammered. "Didn't you see him? We should have caught them all sir, but they slid down ropes over the stern, and got away in a boat just before daylight!"

"Did they get anything?" I asked him.

"Get anything! They got all the stores, sir -- including the paint."

Well, I'm afraid I can't repeat what I said to that mate; it wouldn't sound proper on an occasion like this. So let's get on with our meeting. Here's Hans Christian Adamson, of the American Museum of Natural History, who will interview Dr. Ditmars. -- Mr. Adamson.

ADAMSON: Thank you, Captain Barker, and now, Dr. Ditmars, the Radio Explorers welcome you. You know, I'd rather expected to find you wearing a black band around your arm because of the death of your pet snake, that rare and deadly Bushmaster.

DR. DITMARS: Well Hans -- that was a bitter blow, for although Bushmasters don't seem to thrive in captivity, this particular snake was doing very well until some parasitical worms that lived in his stomach worked their way into his lungs and caused him to die.

ADAMSON: That's a queer thing! Is that the reason snakes like the Bushmaster die in captivity?

DITMARS: No, this was a highly unusual case. The reason many snakes die in zoos is because they won't eat. But we were so successful in feeding the Bushmaster we thought we'd solved a very major problem.

ADAMSON: Just when did you catch this fellow?

DITMARS: That's the funny part of it -- I didn't catch him. After long hunting for that elusive serpent, which is the largest and most dangerous of the world's vipers, I found him awaiting me in a box in Trinidad.

ADAMSON: You don't say!

DITMARS: Some oil men were drilling a well on the edge of the jungle and their electric current came from a dynamo a mile or so away. They were working at night as it is cooler after sunset. Suddenly, the lights went out. As they could not work, the drillers sat in the dark smoking, talking and waiting for the lights to come back. When it did come on again, the first thing they saw was a bushmaster crawling across the floor.

ADAMSON: Good heavens! Suppose one of the men had stepped on the snake! And say - how did they know it was a bushmaster.

DR. DITMARS: Well, people who live in that part of the world make it their business to know what bushmasters look like. Once they know, they never make a mistake. The creature is pinkish brown, with wide cross-bands of sooty black, and its scales are as rough as a wood rasp.

ADAMSON: Thanks for the description...Now I'll know a bushmaster when I meet one. But what did the men in the oil shack do when they saw the snake?

DIRMARS: What did they do? They jumped for their lives through doors and windows. The snake would have left too if it hadn't been for one of the engineers - a chap by the name of Thomas, who had come to the tropics from Louisiana. He had heard that I wanted a Bushmaster so fastening some soft, heavy cord on a pole, he noosed the reptile. Before it had time to work itself into a rage he swung it into a big packing case and threw some boards over the top. I had the fun of getting that creature out of the case and into a traveling-box.

ADAMSON: Fun! Some fun, I should say! You don't seem to mind handling Bushmasters any more than if they were glow-worms.

DITMARS: Well, of course, there was a certain amount of technique in taking that snake from the crate and getting it into the traveling box. As I slowly rolled the covering back, he gazed up at me in what appeared an antagonistic spirit. I decided that a single abrupt move would start a lot of trouble.

(MORE)

DITMARS: In my hands I had a four foot stick with a blunt hook on one end -- with it I gently lifted him from the case, possibly taking a certain amount of chance, but it was done so slowly that the Bushmaster kept quiet. Then, placing him on the floor, I induced him to glide toward the traveling case. As it looked dark inside and possibly inviting to a Bushmaster - he went in. I slid down the door, and there he was.

ADAMSON: So that's the story of Mr. Bushmaster. -- What else is there about South America that draws you like a magnet, Dr. Ditmars?

DITMARS: Well, Hans, the answer to that is there are a number of problems relating to animal life down there that I want to work out. The past two summers were largely devoted to the habits of the vampire bat. I brought back four of those bats last summer. The year before I brought one to the Park -- the first living vampire ever to be exhibited.

ADAMSON: So your first specimen proved so popular that you decided to increase the family?

DITMARS: No, that was not quite the idea. The first vampire, after weeks of care, became tame enough to move about at night, as I watched it, and it exhibited habits which astonished me. I found that the vampire walked about on the tips of its wing stalks and its downthrust limbs, like a big spider. That indicated that the vampire thus prowled over its sleeping victims in looking for spots where it could use its lance-like teeth.

ADAMSON: You know, Dr. Ditmars -- it's really a shame this interview didn't take place on the day after Thanksgiving.

DITMARS: You mean November 28th - Vampire Day?

ADAMSON: Aha -- I see that you know your Dracula. What is Vampire Day anyway?

DITMARS: Well, it's a superstition that dates back to the Middle Ages in Central Europe. On that day all the vampires are supposed to go on their annual spree and people rub the doors and windows of their homes with garlic to keep the vampires out.

ADAMSON: I see -... Are Vampire bats as bad as their name implies?

DITMARS: Well -- the Vampire Bat is a queer creature to say the least. For instance, I observed that it lapped defibrinated blood, obtained from a city slaughter house, out of a dish, with a long, darting tongue. Thus, it was not a "bloodsucking" bat, as has long been alleged. Another trait I noted was that it could leap straight upward from the ground and take first flight. Ordinary bats, you know, must crawl up a wall backward for some distance, before they take off.

DITMAR: But, as you know, Hans a scientist can't make claims of definitely establishing new habits if his observations are based upon a single specimen. So I went after more vampires last summer, and got seven additional specimens. And there's another species of bat I hope to catch next year -- the New World's largest bat. It has a wing-spread of nearly a yard, and in habits, from what I can infer from a mounted specimen, it is virtually a reduced replica of the prehistoric pterodactyl.

ADAMSON: You mean the great flying reptiles that lived thousands of centuries ago?

DITMARS: Something like that -- Linnaeus called it the Vampirus Spectrum, as he seemed to think that it was the actual blood-sucking bat, about which tales were everywhere heard in the early exploration of the New World tropics. In subsequent years, scientists thought that Linnaeus had labeled the bat and that it was a harmless fruit-eating species. But my studies lead me to believe that while Linnaeus gave this big bat a bad name, he might have provided it with one even worse.

ADAMSON: And how do you conclude that the Vampire is the Bad Wolf among Bats?

DITMARS: Well --- even though this bat doesn't appear to have blood-drinking habits, as does the real vampires, it actually appears to be the real terror among bats. I brought the head of a dead specimen back with me and it's a fearsome object with long, protruding upper and lower canine teeth, indicating that it's a killer - It probably hunts for rodents, sleeping birds and lizards - a predatory prowler of the night that swoops in silence upon its victims.

ADAMSON: All in all a most unpleasant fellow. - Thank you, Dr. Ditmars. This has been a most interesting talk, and a fine glimpse of strange things few of us ever see. I hope you'll find out a lot more about this miniature monster on your next trip.

(APPLAUSE)

ADAMSON: And now, Captain Barker, I turn the microphone back to you.

BARKER: One second, Hans, before you go. Where do we travel to next Sunday?

ADAMSON: To Cairo and Bagdad with Air Commodore Fellowes of the Royal Air Force who will tell us of the dangers he faced with other fliers in exploring the Syrian Desert to establish the British Air Patrol.

BARKER: By jove, that should be a thriller. We'll have a full muster of the Radio Explorer's to welcome Commodore Fellowes.

You know, fellow club members, in years gone by I've played Santa Claus to five of my own children -- all of them now grown up -- I've played santa at Sea to many a sailor man ... and it's been a lot of fun, I may tell you.

But it's nothing compared to the fun I'm having this year, playing Santa to the thousands of members of the American Bosch Radio Explorer's club. Last week, if you'll remember, I told you about the extraordinary free Christmas gift which I had selected -- at the request of American-Bosch -- for every member of the club requesting it. And I'm not a bit surprised that so many have already stepped forward to get theirs.

Just in case you missed our last meeting let me tell you again about this free Christmas gift to club members.

It's a globe...a special American-Bosch Radio Explorer's Club Revolving Globe of the Earth, lithographed in many bright colors.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN BARKER: (CONTINUED)

What a wonderfully interesting and educational thing to have in your home. Turn it -- you can put your finger on any spot on the face of the world. Turn it again -- there's the route which Lindbergh followed on his New York to Paris solo flight.

Now look at the bast of the globe, another surprise! It's a ready-reference log of the most important world-wide short-wave radio stations. I've had a lot of fun this week and you can do the same - listening on my American -Bosch-Round-The-World Radio, to programs in strange lands far across the sea, while I located these countries on the Radio Explorer's Globe.

Now then, Every club member in the U.S.A. is entitled to a free globe. There's nothing to buy. No contest to win. To get

your globe merely go to your nearest American-Bosch dealer and ask him for it. That's all there is to it! Be sure to have with you your certificate of membership in the American Bosch Radio Explorer's Club so the dealer can identify you as a club member. Children under 16 must be accompanied by a parent.

And if you are not already a member -- why then, the only thing you do is to hustle and get your application in immediately so you too can get a globe before the time limit expires. Here's Ben Grauer now, to tell you how easy it is to join.

ANNOUNCER:

Easy to join? I'll say it is. But before I tell you how easy, I want to remind you of the additional advantages of membership in the American-Bosch-Radio Explorers Club.

ANNOUNCER: (CONTINUED)

Every new member receives, first, the attractive club button; second, the membership certificate, suitable for framing, which bears a reproduction of Captain Barker's old ship, the British Isles; third, the official Radio Explorer's authorized radio map which enables you to locate over 800 important short-wave stations throughout the world. And now, to cap it all, every member can have absolutely free from his local American-Bosch dealer, the revolving Christmas-gift globe. To join the American-Bosch Radio Explorers Club, merely send your name and address, with the name and age of the radio set to which you are listening to American-Bosch, American B-O-S-C-H, Springfield, Massachusetts.

Christmas carols from merry England...Christmas bells from France....Christmas cheer from Mexico, Australia, Africa, This year you can hear them all -- direct from Europe or South America or almost any part of the world. -- if there's An American-Bosch Round-the World Radio under your Christmas tree. Dealers are now showing American-Bosch consoles and table models with round-the-world range... as well as beautiful little personal radios that are thrilling Christmas gifts for the children's rooms or those away at school or college. Ask to hear Model 480D, American-Bosch standard bearer which features Right Angle Tuning, Multi-Wave Selector, and other exclusive American-Bosch developments. In mechanical efficiency... in beauty of cabinet...in sheer tone quality we have been told, it is unequalled by any other radios anywhere at any price. There is an American-Bosch Radio for every purse and purpose -- so look and listen at your dealers.

(SIGNATURE FADES IN)

ANNOUNCER:

Remember, to join the American-Bosch Radio Explorers Club which entitles you to the free Christmas Globe and other benefits, merely send your name and address, with the name and age of the radio set to which you are listening, to American-Bosch, Springfield, Massachusetts.

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